لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

إن الدين عند الله الإسلام

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

March 1963

ROR

EDITORS

S. D. AHMAD M. G. AHMAD

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM

The Ahmadiyya Movement was founded in 1889 by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. He declared that God had conferred upon him the dignity of Prophethood. He claimed that he had received this blessing through being a perfect follower of the Holy Prophet. He claimed to be the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the Expected Messenger of all the religions of the world. He explained that God had raised him for the purpose of re-establishing the dominion of Islam and to shed light upon the true teachings of the Holy Quran. With him, in fact, had started a new era, the renaissance of Islam.

One startling historical disclosure he made, was that Jesus Christ had escaped death at the crucifixion and had subsequently travelled to Kashmir, where his tomb still exists at Srinagar.

When Hazrat Ahmad published his claims and revelations received by him, he encountered a severe storm of opposition from all quarters and all communities. In spite of this opposition God began to strengthen his voice and people began to follow him. At the time of his death in 1908, he had gathered around him a group of faithful and staunch followers not only in India but also in other countries, numbering hundreds of thousands.

After his death in 1908, he was succeeded by the Late Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin Sahib as his First Khalifa. At his death in 1914, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, was elected as his second Khalifa.

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This is an organ of the Ahmadiyya Movement which represents true Islam. It deals with religious, ethical, social and economic questions, Islamic mysticism and current topics. It also provides Book Reviews.

It is open to all for discussing problems connected with the religious and spiritual growth of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles, nor does it accept any responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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THE REVIEW OF RELIGIONS

RABWAH, WEST PAKISTAN

Vol. LVII **MARCH 1963** **No III**

The Supreme Book

بل قالوا اضغاث احلام بل افتراه بل هو شاعر
فليأتنا باية كما ارسل الاولون .

"Nay, they say, '*These are but* confused dreams ; nay, he has forged it ; nay, he is *but* a poet. Let him then bring us a Sign just as the former *Prophets* were sent *with Signs*." (*21 : 6*)

According to this verse we find three types of people confronting the Holy Prophet of Islam. Some thought the Holy Quran to be a mixture of confused dreams. Others believed it to be an out-right forgery composed by the Holy Prophet himself and given out as the Word of God. Yet others regarded it as fanciful poetry. These three objections were raised by three different types of people or by the same people as and when the occasion made it convenient. The beautiful arrangement and order and the form of a connected whole of the Holy Quran and that it contains excel-

lent teachings gives the lie to their claim that it is a mixture of confused dreams. The obvious unacceptibility of their claim forces them to shift their ground and they say that the Prophet has forged it himself. This claim, too, has no ground to stand on. The very life of the Holy Prophet, his dealings, his behaviour, and his character project a picture which is totally contrary to this. He was known by one and all as صدوق (truthful) and امین (honest). How could a man who was never, in all his forty long years of life, even remotely accused of underhand dealings or of a shadow of a misstatement could be accused of suddenly forging lies against God Almighty. Every Meccan knew in his heart of hearts that this claim was false. They had had personal dealings with him in which he showed utmost care to be clean and truthful. Willingly or unwillingly they had to shift their ground again and accused him of being a poet. They accused him of using his literary capabilities and command of language as a means for establishing himself as a dictatorial leader. The Holy Quran refuses to entertain this claim as foolish and self-contradictory. If the Holy Prophet was capable of composing such a remarkable piece of literature comprising among other things a host of prophecies why should he ascribe its authorship to an imaginary God. Why shouldn't he claim it for himself, as according to him that was the actual fact. Obviously by doing so he stood a great chance of enhancing his prestige.

The demand, *let him then bring us a Sign just as the former Prophets were sent with Signs* was not made to the Holy Prophet only. It was demaded practically of all the Prophets. We read in Matthew :

"Master, we should see a sign of thee" (12/38)

Jesus was very much infuriated at the attitude of the Scribes and the Pharisees that he not only refused to show any sign but also chid them for it.

> "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of Prophet Sonas." (Matthew. 12 : 39)

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Similar is the case with the Holy Prophet. The refusal to entertain this demand in the manner they expected does not imply a total refusal. It was given to demonstrate that the demand was an insolent and foolish one. The demands vary from age to age, and so the Heavenly Signs must undergo a corresponding change. It is foolish to ask to show today the signs shown by Noah in his time. They were certainly effective and convincing then but may not be now, as the human mind and intellect have undergone an evolutionary change. The signs shown by the Holy Prophet would be different from those shown by the earlier prophets—Moses, Jesus and others.

Even in this enlightened age there are people who level the same charges against the Holy Prophet and the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran has been subjected to most intense critical appreciation by the scholars of all religions. It has stood the test of 13 centuries and has come out victorious. The internal evidence is unshakable. Every other religious book has come out a poor second. Its language is clear and lucid. It has offered advice in every vista of this troubled world. It has come up to meet the challenge of times in every age. It has never failed anyone. It has taken millions of people out of sin-filled slums and raised them to the pinnacles of purity. It is really a Supreme Book !

The Concepts of Sovereignty and Nationalism in Islam

Shamsur Rahman, Bar-at-Law

Islam has elaborately and convincingly brought out the real import of these two terms, Sovereignty and Nationalism. But before discussing the Islamic point of view it is necessary to study the views of modern thinkers on these two vital terms in politics.

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Sovereignty and Nationalism are but two ingredients which go to form a State. So a fuller appreciation of these two terms will necessarily require some discussion of what we understand by the small five lettered word 'State'. The term state has been variously defined by the political thinkers. To cut it short I shall only quote the one supplied by Garner which is rather very common amongst us and which has been accepted by almost all of our text book writers as giving more or less a correct idea of 'State'. According to him State is a Community occupying a definite portion of territory 'independent (or nearly so) of external control and possessing an organised government to which the great body of inhabitants render habitual obedience. The bracketted expression 'nearly so' was probably introduced by Garner as a device to bring the British Dominions within the orbit of state.

Now this elaborate definition brings out in sharp focus the following essential elements of the State : viz. Sovereignty, population wherein is the seed of nationalism, territory and government. Of these elements today's discussion will be confined to the first two elements of State.

Almost all political thinkers, old and new, seem to agree that Sovereignty is the most essential element of the State. The State has been imagined to be supreme both externally and internally. In this context the State has been conceived of having its domain confined within a particular portion of this

earth, other portion or portions of the earth having similar State or States. In other words, more than one State having independent existence and without having any control of others have been imagined on this limited world of ours. Sovereignty in relation to such a State has been described to be a condition which makes the State free from any external forces or order and internally which required the great body of its inhabitants to render habitual obedience. The Sovereignty has been thought to be a coercive power, a power which is able enough to repel any external intrusion and demand internal obedience, which gives the state a distinctive feature as against all other forms of human association. It is said that such coercive power to be termed sovereignty must be as wide as can be thought of consistent with human limitations. Of course some modern thinkers seem to question this all-pervading nature of Sovereignty. I shall revert to this aspect later on.

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The question next arises as to who or which group or organisation in the state should be deemed to possess this Sovereignty. On this point I find the thinkers most divergent. But a searching look back seems to disclose a gradual evolutionary process culminating in the idea that Sovereignty rests with the people who form the State. To them it seems to be a will of the people expressed through the administrative organs of the state. These organs however, have taken different forms in different states as we find them around us, detailed discussion of which is neither possible nor necessary for our present purpose. Three things emerge from the above discussion. Firstly, Sovereignty is a coercive power for repelling external intrusion and commanding internal obedience. Secondly, it rests with the people. Thirdly it is unfettered and all-pervading in nature, subject, of course, to human limitation as already mentioned.

All the modern states, we find on this earth, have clothed them with the above brand of Sovereignty which is materially different from that posed by Islam. Islam begins with the theme : الحمد لله رب العالمين that is, all praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of the worlds.'' The word *Rab* رب signifies three very important attributes of Allah. This single word tells us that Allah creates, sustains and develops. He is not only the Lord of this world. His *Rabbubyyat* ربوبیت reaches

the farthest imaginable corner of this vast Universe. He is, therefore, the only Being Who deserves total praise and obedience. This Lordship and obedience in relation to the Sovereignty of this world has been more clearly outlined elsewhere by Allah in the Holy Quran. Thus Allah says :

> "And blessed is He to Whom belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth and all that is between them and with Him is the knowledge of the Hour, and to Him shall you be brought back." (43 : 86)

This verse is a clear indication of the fact that Sovereignty of this earth rests with Allah Who is only to be praised. Since the Almighty Allah is one and has no other rival and since He is the sole Master and Sovereign of this earth, the term Sovereignty according to Islam will have the following characteristic features :

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1. There being only one Sovereign state in the whole Universe the question of Sovereignty need not be imagined to have been vested with the power to repel external intrusion.
2. The Sovereignty conceived of in Islam is really unfeterred and all-pervading in this true sense of the terms since it rests with a Being Who is imagined to be Almighty, Omnipotent and similar other all-pervading attributes.
3. The residence of the Sovereignty lies not with the people but with the Supreme Being that is Almighty Allah.

This idealised concept requires some practical means through which human affairs on earth can be effectively conducted. The Almighty Allah in His infinite wisdom has made ample provision in the Holy Quran to this end. Thus Allah says in that Holy Book :

هو الذى خلق لكم ما فى الارض جميعاً .

"He it is Who created for you (mankind) all

that is in the earth." (30 : 2)

In the very next verse Allah says :

انى جاعل فى الارض خليفة .

"I am about to place a vicegerent in the earth".

Again Allah says :

ان الله يامركم ان تودوا الامانات الى اهلها و اذا
حكمتم بين الناس ان تحكموا بالعدل .

"Verily Allah commands you to make over the trusts to those who are fit for them and that when you judge between men you judge with justice." (4 : 5)

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Once Allah has made it crystal clear that His is the Sovereignty on earth as well as on the heaven and also every thing in between them. He is the only Being Who is competent to lay down how this earth should be administered so as to produce the best result. And determined it has been with great clarity as even a cursory glance over the above quoted three verses reveal.

The first of the above three verses declares that whatever Allah has created on earth, from the insignificant to biggest ever of the big, has been created for mankind as a whole. So the entire humanity has to enjoy the fruits of this earth. This declaration gives equal rights to every member of the human race irrespective of caste, creed or race. But to avoid any chaos over the enjoyment of this earth's resources, Allah, in the very next verse, declares that there will be some representative on the earth. The word خليفة (*Khalifa*) means one who represents. Here the word has double meaning in that the *Khalifa* will represent Allah on earth while representing human race as well for the sake of discipline and orderly enjoyment of this earth. Such representatives who, while performing dual function both spiritual and material or performing spiritual function only, receive direct assignment from Allah are commonly known as Prophets. Allah's direction for choosing a representative for exercising material

sovereignty alone is contained in the third verse quoted above, which lays down that persons who are fit from amongst the human race should be chosen for entrustment of the '*Amanat*' i.e. the Soverignty. Next portion of the verse admonishes the trustees of this sovereignty to exercise their authority with equity, justice and fairplay. This admonition is also contained in Chapter *Al-imran* in a different way which runs as follows :

قل اللهم مالك الملك تؤتى الملك من تشاء وتنزع الملك
ممن تشاء وتعز من تشاء و تذل من تشاء بيدك الخير
انك على كل شى قدير .

"Say 'O Allah, Lord of sovereignty, Thou givest sovereignty to whomsoever Thou pleasest ; and Thou takest away sovereignty from whomsoever thou pleasest. Thou exhaultest whomsoever Thou pleasest and Thou abasest whomsoever Thou pleasest. In Thy hand is all good. Thou surely hast power to do all things."
(3 : 27)

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This marvellous verse has unfortunately been very much misunderstood. It does not say that however much a ruler on earth having sovereignty is oppressive, tyrannous and despotic he has the seal of appoinment from Allah and should therefore, be looked upon as Allah's representative. This verse on the other hand clearly indicates that the Sovereignty belongs to Allah and Allah alone. Whoever on earth by whatever means steps into the domain of Allah's sovereignty he does so by using the means whose ultimate creator is also Allah and so he should consider himself to be nothing more than a trust and as such answerable to Allah for any wrong use of Allah's means and for committing any wrong as sovereign. In other words, by acquiring sovereign power on earth he cannot get away from the power of ultimate sovereign that is Allah. If modern man had trenched into the field of Quranic law and dug into the historical past he would have at once discerned the symmetry of a luxuriant garden of a perfect system laid

down by the Almighty Allah in His infinite mercy and wisdom for the benefit of mankind a system which provides for their limitless progress through peaceful use and exploitation of nature. Thus Allah's sovereignty according to His scheme has to be enjoyed by the people on earth subject to the overriding condition that in the enjoyment of the sovereignty the commands of Allah as laid down in the holy book should be obeyed. These commands are,—in short, contained in the verses quoted below :

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اطیعوا اللہ و اطیعوا الرسول و اولی الامر منکم .

"Obey Allah and obey this Prophet of His and those amongst you who have been entrusted with the responsibility of passing orders :

فان تنازعتم فی شی فردوہ الی اللہ و الرسول .

"And if you differ in anything among yourselves refer it to Allah and His Messenger, a perfect system indeed." (5 : 60)

The pertinent question may now arise that once sovereignty has come to mankind where does it vary materially with the modern concept and what benefit would at all result to the human race if the imaginary superstructure of Allah's sovereignty was accepted.

According to Lasky, State is a society which is integrated by possessing a coercive authority legally supreme over any individual or group which is part of the society, Continuing further he says, "The human mind indeed revolts from the notion that the possession of coercive power can be defended regardless of the *ends to which it is devoted.*" We argue, as with Aristotle it exists to promote the good life. We insist as with Hobbes, that there can be no civilization without the security it (state) provided by its power over life and death. We agree as with Locke, that only a common rule-making organ, to the operation of which men consent can give as those rights to life and liberty and property without the peaceful enjoyment of which we are condemned to a miserable existence.

Further continuing Lasky writes—"Few institutions have receivcd penegyrics more splendid than the state. They are recognition of the fact that because individuals move differently to the attainment of conflicting desires a common authority is necessary in the society to define the terms upon which that movement may legitimately proceed." Further he says—"Any national society will reveal association of men grouped together to promote all kinds of objects, religious, cultural, economic, political in which they are interested. Such a society is a state when the way of life to which both individuals or associations of individuals must conform as defined by a coercive authority binding upon them. This (supreme coercive) power is called sovereignty and it is by the possession of sovereignty that the state is distinguished from all other forms of human organisations. Its will is, formally an unchallengeable will, since otherwise it could not be supreme. The state is supreme because it gives order to all and receives orders from none."

The above extensive quotations from the writings of a great authority on political science will clearly show that the object of state with its sovereignty is to lay down and maintain in proper order all the roads leading to the over-all progress of the people under its sway. Its role is that of an umpire to adjust the differences amongst the subjects so that all can have fair deal. Its duty is that of a watch-dog to protect life, liberty and property of its subjects. For all these purposes its sovereignty must be unchallenged. It must have the unquestioned authority to give orders and to receive none.

But the question is what is the guarantee that the state will not commit mistakes in laying down the road for progress and open the high way for utter destruction of its subjects. What is the guarantee that the state's umpiring will not benefit a certain section of the subject to the detriment of other sections or groups. What is the guarantee that instead of protecting the life, liberty and property of the subjects the state with its unchallenged and supreme coercive power will not coerce the subjects of their life, liberty and property. Above all, in the modern concept of multi-state world what is the remedy when the in-

terest of one state clashes with that of the neighbouring or other states. It is of course argued that all these problems can be solved by peaceful means through conferences etc ; but as we all know divorced from religion, the only effective means is unbridled violence and resort to arms.

Let us now see what alternative Islam suggests for us. The Holy Quran furnishes the following reasons for disregarding the idea of many gods in favour of one Allah's sovereignty :

لو كان فيهما الهة الا الله لفسدتا .

"Had there been many gods besides Allah (in the earth and heaven) there would have been disturbance."

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The word فسدتا used here by Allah is very important. As a matter of fact the seed of فساد i.e. disturbance, trouble and chaos is ingrained in the very idea of multi-state world. Our very best desires to serve the humanity may lead to inter-national clashes in a multi-state world while the idea of one-ness of world sovereignty at once drives home a fundamental unity of the entire humanity which revolts against coming to any homicidal clash. Where is the room for cutting each other's throat when all of us submit to one Allah, one sovereign be-fore whom we are all equal, before whom we have no caste, creed and community except that our nearness to Him will de-pend only on our good deeds and not on our colour, language, habitation or dress.

The division in small states under the overall sovereignty of Allah has been found neccssary only for convenience. Minor differences arising amongst them can be mostly resolved without resort to arms if the principles laid down in the Holy Quran are faithfully adhered to. The Holy Quran has provided for dealing with any recalcitrant state in extreme circumstances. That is another aspect of Islam. I should not go into the details of that branch of politics at the moment. This much I may assert with emphasis that the Quranic solution is far superior to the half-hearted attempt through setting up the United Nations Organisa-

tion. Nevertheless the U.N.O. is an indication of the way the wind is blowing.

In the internal sphere also the questions posed above can only be effectively answered by accepting limited sovereignty, a sovereignty subject to the directions of the supreme sovereign that is Allah as contained in the Holy Book reference to which has been made above.

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In the internal sector the same voice of *limiting* sovereignty is discernible as will be evident from the following quotations :

"The theory of the state has been too long dominated by the legalist conception of the sovereignty. While that conception may be useful enough in its own place, it becomes not only inadequate but false when it is applied to explain the substantial nature of sovereignty. The state is one of the organs of Community. Legalistic doctrine speaks in terms of power and not of service. In the last resort it is only an ability to render service which is recognised, constitued and controlled by the kind of service it can render.

"But then disputes touching the residence of sovereignty did not raise the crucial issue of its socially (not morally) determined range."

The underlying idea contained in the above quotation is obvious. The sovereignty is now sought to be controlled by the object it wants to achieve. It is no longer likened to an all weather garment. In other words, controlled, that is, limited sovereignty is the topic of the day.

Fourteen hundred years ago a clarion call was made in the desert of Arabia proclaiming the sovereignty of Allah. Many spurned at the claim and even derided it. But slowly, surely and unconsciously the entire humanity is moving to that direction.

Nationalism

The world is thought to be multi-nationalistic i.e. it is thought to be multi-state having parallel sovereignties functioning simultaneously. So we find the world of today as a matter of fact.

It has to be made clear at the outset that it is not nationality in legal sense which we are considering here. Residence and other legal requirements may suffice to confer nationality in any civilized and well-organised country of to-day. A Pakistani can very well be a British national on fulfiling certain legal requiremets of Great Britain. But that nationality can hardly make him English over-night.

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Then what makes a nation and what is nationalism? This tricky question has raked the brains of all political thinkers who, as it appears to me, have not been able to agree as to how the nationalism in fact grows.

According to Spenglar, nations are neither linguistic nor political nor biological, but spiritual unities. This' 'spiritual unity' theory has, however, come under very sharp criticism. According to another political thinker, 'Nationality is the sense of community which under the historical conditions of a particular social epoch has possesed or still seeks expression through the unity of a state. Various as are the conditions on which it rests the sense of nationality is itself definite and strong and moving, more so than the mere pride and vain glory of multiple egoism, so that men are aroused by its name and thought to deep stirring of devotion, sacrifice and even of worships.

One thing seems, however, to be certain that the seed of nationalism sprouts in the feeling of unity amongst a group of mankind. This feeling may be the result of one or more factors, historical, religious, cultural, economic, ethical, linguistic, and geographical etc. It therefore, clearly follows from this premises that the idea of nationalism was never static. It was all along a dynamic idea which did not always pay respect to geographical or other barriers. The higher the ideal giving rise to the feeling of unity the wider was its ambit. The Jewish nation can be cited as an example in point. But for practical purposes of giving shape to a workable state this national unity became active within geographical limitations. Numerous states thus came into being.

But with the formation of well-orgnised states the idea of nationalism is now looked upon as a static one to be confined forever within the compartments of those states with the result

that we are now surrounded by the feeling of aggravated water-tight nationalism which in fact aroused thoughts to so deep stirrings of devotion, sacrifice and even of worships that the whole world was shaken twice in this century from its very bottom.

After these terrible nightmares the world, it seems, is now thinking on the lines of internationalism. But fourteen hundred years ago the Almighty Allah proclaimed in unmistakable terms that the entire world is one inspite of our various differences which are nothing more than distinctive features for our convenience.

Allah says in the Holy Quran :

انما المومنون اخوة فاصلحوا بين اخويكم و اتقوا الله

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لعلكم ترحمون

"Surely *all* believers are brothers. So make peace between brothers and fear Allah that mercy may be shown to you."

يايها الناس انا خلقنكم من ذكر وانثىٰ وجعلنا كم

شعوبا وقبائل لتعارفو ان اكرمكم عندالله اتقا كم

ان الله عليم خبير

"O mankind, We have created you from a male and a female; and We have made you into tribes and sub-tribes that you may recognize each other. Verily, the most honourable among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most righteous among you. Surely Allah is All-knowing, All-aware." (49 : 14)

These two verses have set at nought all the conjectures about Nationalism. To Islam talks about many nations are not at all material. Islam recognises only one broad nation that is the entire humanity. Within this great nation Islam admits groups and subgroups in this world only for practical convenience they all belonging to the one vast nation of mankind while reminding at the same time that these groupings do not confer any superiority of one upon the other. Islam recognises only one superiority

that is on the basis of individual quality backed by good actions approved by Allah.

So, even if the world is divided into groups or so-called nations, they are nothing but integral parts of the great nation comprising the entire humanity as envisaged in Islam and if this idea of nationalism can be infused into the different groups much of the cause of differences will vanish and the world will then be a place when decent men can live with honour, dignity and above all in peace.

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So, sub-sovereignties within one supreme sovereign and groupings within the vast single nation of mankind are the orders of Allah and the scheme of Islam. This is the surest way to avoid individual as well as national bickerings. This is the only means for bringing peace and happiness in this war-ravaged earth. This is the only royal road to progress and prosperity. This is the only premise for the fullest manifestation of all human qualities so that human being can reach its ultimate object, the knowledge of Allah which alone can quench the otherwise unsuitable human thirst for knowing the unknown—a condition in human life which can give man real peace and happiness. For those to wnom this may seem to be utopian or wishful thinking I have only one answer. The Almighty Allah has unequivocally declared in the Holy Quran that :

كتب الله لا غلبن انا و رسلى ان الله قوى عزيز

"Allah has decreed" Most surely I will prevail, I and My Messengers. Verily, Allah is Powerful, Mighty." (55 : 22)

This pithy but meaningful verse has made two definite declarations—that Allah and His messengers shall ultimately be victorious and that He is Powerful and Mighty. Fourteen hundred years have elasped since this declaration was made to the world. Has this period of 14 hundred years passed in vain without any move in that direction ? No. The voice which vibrated the desert of Arabia has not subsided or passed into oblivion, but has grown in volume and is growing. Meanwhile the obstacles on the way to realise the vision of one world which

seemed to be insurmountable have almost all vanished by now. To-day the world appears to be a small household even to a layman. The barrier of distance on the rock of which many kingdoms dashed to pieces in the past is no longer a problem now. So also other similar problems. We have thus already had the taste of Allah's might and power. The final blow will not be far when the remainder of the blocks will vanish to pave the way for ushering in the new era, the "Millennium".

So, let us make ourselves worthy of it and prepare for that Millennium so that even if we are not present then our posterity may be worthy successors to that blissful joy of having one sovereign and one nation on the earth.

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Meanings of Hud

Pir Salahuddin B.A.LLB. P.C.S.

The author of this translation has undertaken the task of presenting the Koran in easy and readable English. The Chapter of Hud is being published as its specimen with a view to soliciting the opinions and suggestions of the readers who are requested kindly to communicate their comments directly to the translator.

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Section 1

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

2. Alif Lam Ra.*

This is a Book containing verses full of wisdom and clearly expounded. It proceeds from the All-Wise, All-Knowing. From Him I come to you as a warner and a harbinger of happy news, saying:

> "Serve none but Allah, and seek the pardon of your Lord, and turn to Him, repenting. If you do so He will grant you a goodly provision for a given term and bestow His favour on the deserving. But if you turn your back on Him, I fear the punishment of the Dreadful Day in store for you; for you have to return to Allah, and He is powerful over all things."

Look! to hide their secrets from the Prophet they double up their breasts. Look! when they try to hide their true nature, He knows what they hide and what they reveal, for He is aware of the innermost secrets of the heart.

7. There is not a creature on the earth but Allah is responsible for feeding it; and He knows of its haunts and resorts. All this is recorded in a clear Book.

8. He it is who has, with His throne resting on the water, created the heavens and the earth in six days,† to see which one of you excels in good deeds.

And if you tell them that they will be raised after death, the unbelievers will call it an obvious hoax.

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*I am Allah, the Seeing.
†22 : 48 and 70 : 5.

9. And if We defer their punishment for a little while they will enquire as to what keeps it back. Look! it will not be averted from them the day it overtakes them. And they will be overwhelmed by that which they mocked at.

Section 2

10. And if We let a man have a taste of Our mercy and then withdraw it, he despairs and becomes ungrateful.

11. But if We give him a taste of prosperity after he has met with adversity, he is exultant and boastful, and says:

"I am rid of all evil."

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12. Such however, is not the case with the men who are steadfast and perform good deeds. They are the ones for whom there awaits pardon and a great reward.

13. Would you rather omit a part of your revelation and be distressed in your mind for their saying:

"Why has he not been given a treasure or been accompanied by an angel?"

But you are no more than a warner; and Allah alone is a Guardian over all things.

14. Do they say he has forged it? Say:

"If you are correct in your plea, produce ten fabricated chapters like it, calling to your help whomsoever you can besides Allah. But if your helpers fail to respond to you, you can well imagine that it has been revealed in the wisdom of Allah and that there is no god but He. Will you not then submit in spite of all this?"

16. Those who desire this life and its ornaments, We will repay them here for their deeds and they will not be put to a loss therein. They are the ones for whom there is nothing in the Hereafter but the Fire. Their machinations in the present life have been of no avail and their activities have proved futile. How can they be like the one who is possessed of a clear proof from his Lord, is followed by a witness from Him, and is preceded by the Book of Moses, which is a guide and a mercy? Those who accept the Book of Moses are the ones who believe in the Koran. But whichever group rejects it shall have the Fire for its promised place. Then let no doubts trouble your mind about it, for it is the truth from your Lord. But even so most of the men do not believe in it.

19. And who may be more wicked than those who attribute false statements to Allah? They will be produced before their

Lord with the witnesses deposing:

"Here are the men who lied against their Lord."

Look! the curse of Allah rests upon the wicked, the ones who turn men away from the way of Allah, seeking to make it crooked, and have no faith in the Hereafter. It will not be given to them to frustrate His will on the earth, and they will have no friends to help them against Allah. They will get their punishment twice over, for they can neither see nor hear. They are the ones who have harmed themselves, and their forgeries have left them alone. Verily they will be the worst losers in the Hereafter.

24. But the men who have believed and have performed good deeds and have humbled themselves before their Lord, they are the inmates of Paradise, wherein they will live for ever.

25. These two groups are like two men, one of whom is deaf and blind and the other one can see and hear. How are the two alike? Don't you understand?

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Section 3

26. We had sent Noah to his people to say:

"I have come to you as a plain warner so that you serve none but Allah, for I fear the suffering of the Day of Torment in store for you."

28. But the unbelieving chiefs of his tribe said,

"We see in you nothing more than a mortal like us. And we do not see any one following you save those who, to all appearances, are the meanest of us. And we do not see you and your followers possessed of any superiority over us. In fact we take you to be liars."

29. Said Noah:

"O'my people! don't you see that I may be possessed of a clear proof from my Lord, and He has shown me His mercy to which you are blind? But should we thrust it upon you even though you hate it?

"O'my people! I ask you for no wealth for the services I render, for my wages are due from Allah alone. And I am not the one to drive the believers away to please you; for whereas they will meet their Lord, I can see that you are men steeped in ignorance.

31. "O'my people! who would help me against

Allah, if I drive them away? How is it you do not understand?

32. "O'my people! I do not profess to be in possession of the treasure of Allah, nor do I know the unseen. And I do not claim to be an angel. And I do not say that those who are hateful in your eyes will not receive any favour from Allah, for Allah alone knows best that which is in their mind. Indeed if I do anything of the kind I will be joining the wicked."

33. They said:

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"O'Noah! you have been contending with us long and often. Now bring about that with which you threatened us, if you have been speaking the truth."

34. Said Noah:

"Allah will bring it about if He pleases, and you shall not frustrate His will. My advice can do you no good, even if I am minded to advise you, if Allah decides to spell your destruction. He is your Lord and to Him shall you be brought back?"

36. Do they say he has forged it? Say:

"If I have forged it, I shall answer for my crime. But I stand absolved of the crime you commit."

Section 4.

And the Revelation came to Noah:

"None but the one who has already believed is going to believe from among your folk. Do not then distress yourself over the things they do. And build the Ark under Our eyes and direction. And plead not with Me for the wicked. They are doomed to be drowned."

39. And Noah set himself to making the Ark. And every time the chiefs of his tribe passed by him, they laughed at him. Said he:

"You may laugh at us, for* we shall be able to laugh back at you just as you laugh at us. And

*Or: 'for we laugh at you just as you laugh at us.' You laugh at us, taking us to be fools, who are doing something in vain, and we laugh at you taking you to be fools, who cannot see the obvious truth.

soon shall you know as to who receives a disgraceful punishment and on whom descends a lasting penalty."

41. But when the time for Our decree to be enforced came, and the waters of the valley swelled, We said to Noah:

"Put in the Ark two of every kind, male and female, the believers and all the members of your family, barring the one against whom the verdict has already been announced."

And there were but a few beleivers to accompany him.

42. Said Noah to his companions :

"Embark in it, leaving to Allah its course and mooring ; for my Lord is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful."

43. And the Ark carried them on waves as high as mountains.

And Noah cried to his son, who was standing aloof,

"O'my child ! embark with us and quit the unbelievers."

Replied he :

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"I will take shelter on a mountain, which will protect me against the water."

Replied Noah :

"But for the one on whom He has mercy, there is no escape from the decree of Allah this day."

And the waves separated the two, and he was drowned.

45. And the time came when the earth was asked to swallow back its waters and the heavens were asked to stop pouring. So the waters subsided and the matter ended with the Ark resting against Al-Djoudi. And the word went forth,

"Gone are the wicked."

46. And cried Noah to his Lord, saying :

"My Lord ! my son belongs to my house and your promise is true. Yet you are the best Judge."

Said He :

"O 'Noah ! he does not belong to your house. He is given to evil deeds. Then do not ask Me for a thing of which you have no knowledge. And I warn you against being one of the ignorant."

48. Said Noah :

"God forbid ! my Lord ! that I should ask you for a thing of which I have no knowledge. And if You do not forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be lost."

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49. Came the word :

"O' Noah ! climb down with Our peace and blessings upon you and upon the various communities with you. There are nations on whom We will bestow Our felicities. But they will, on account of their conduct, receive from Us a painful punishment."

50. O 'Prophet ! these are stories of the unseen We have revealed to you. Neither you nor your people knew of them before this. So have patience, for the issue will be finally decided for the God-fearing.

Section 5

51. And We sent to the Ad their brother Hud. He said : "O' my people ! serve Allah. There is none your god but He. And you are nothing more than those who concoct lies.

52. "O 'my people ! I do not ask you for any wages for the services I render, for my wages are due from my Maker alone. How is it then that you do not understand ?

53. "O 'my people ! seek pardon of your Lord and turn towards Him, for if you do, He will send upon you clouds, over and over, and raise you from strength to strength. And turn not your back on Him as sinners."

54. Said they :

"O 'Hud ! You have not brought us any clear proof and we are not going to abandon our gods just for your words, nor we are going to believe in you. All what we can say is that some of our gods have visited you with evil."

Said Hud :

"I call Allah to witness, and bear you also witness that I have nothing to do with the things you associate with Him. You may intrigue against me, one and all, without giving me any

respite; for in Allah, who is my Lord and your Lord, do I repose my trust. Remember that there walks not a creature but He holds it completely in His power.* And remember that my Lord guards the Straight Path.† Hence if you turn your back on me, bear in mind that I have conveyed to you the Message I was commissioned with, and my Lord, who is the Protector of all things,‡ will replace you with another people, and you will do Him no harm."

59. And when the time came for Our decree to be enforced, in Our mercy did We save Hud, and with him, the believers, and delivered them from a severe torment.

60. These were the Ad. They denied the Signs of their Lord, and disobeyed His Messengers, and took orders from all the haughty tyrants. There trails them a curse in this world and in the Hereafter. Look ! the Ad had rejected their Lord. Behold ! gone are the Ad, the clan of Hud.

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Section 6

62. And we sent to the Thamud their brother Saleh. He said:

"O 'my people ! serve Allah. There is none your god but He. It is He who raised you from the earth and colonized you there. Then seek His pardon and turn to Him repenting, for my Lord is always near and always hears and responds."

63. Said they :

"O' Saleh ! You were the centre of our hopes before now. Do you forbid us to worship what our fathers worshipped ? We certainly have grave doubts regarding the thing you call us to."

Saleh replied :

"O' my people ! don't you see that I may be possessed of a clear proof from my Lord, and He has shown me His mercy ? Who will then help me against Allah, if I rebelled against Him, for you can help add only to my loss."

"O 'my people ! This she-camel of Allah is a

*Lit : but He holds it by its forelock.
†Or : And remember that my Lord protects those who walk in the Straight Path.
‡It means, in the Present Context, 'The Straight Path'.

sign for you. Let her alone, feeding on Allah's earth. And do her no harm, or an immediate penalty will overtake you."

But they hamstrung her.

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Said Saleh :

"You will enjoy yourself in your houses only for three days. Remember that these are no false words."

67. And when the time came for Our decree to be enforced, in Our mercy did We save Saleh, and with him, the believers delivering them from the disgrace of the day. Remember that your Lord is All-Mighty, All-Powerful.

68. And the wicked were caught in a roaring noise and the morning found them lying prostrate in their habitations in a manner as if they had never dwelt there. Look ! the Thamud had rejected their Lord. Behold ! gone are the Thamud.

Section 7

70. And Our Messengers came to Abraham with glad tidings. They greeted him with 'peace' and he greeted them back with 'peace'. And without loosing any time he brought them a roasted calf.

71. But* when he saw their hands not extending towards the calf he suspected them and felt afraid of them. They said :

"Have no fears, for we have been sent to the people of Lot."

72. And his wife was standing by and she wondered. And We gave her the happy news of Isaac, and of Jacob, after Isaac.

73. Said she :

"Woe be to me ! shall I bear a child when I am an old woman and this husband of mine is an old man ? It indeed is a strange thing."

74. Said Our Messengers :

"Do you, O' woman, wonder at the words of Allah ? O' ye the members of this house ! be the Mercy and Blessings of Allah upon you, for He alone is worthy of all praise, and full of all glory."

*The Bible gives a different account. See Gen. 18 : 8.

75. When Abraham was rid of the fear and had received the happy news, he started pleading with Us for the people of Lot. Abraham was undoubtedly gentle and kind and godly.

77. Said We :

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"O' Abraham ! let it be, for the decree of your Lord has come to be enforced and they are going to be awarded a penalty which cannot be revoked."

78. And when Our Messengers came to Lot, he felt troubled on their account and at a loss to help them and called it a hard day. And his people, who were already given to evil practices, came rushing at him in a fretful rage.

Said Lot :

"O 'my people ! Here are my daughters. It will be cleaner for you to take them for hostage. And fear Allah and do not disgrace me in the matter of my guests. Oh! don't you have any right-minded man ?"

80. They replied :

"You are well aware that we have no right to your daughters.* And you certainly know what we want."†

81. Said Lot :

"Were it that I had power to resist you or had a strong clan to protect me."

82. Our Messengers interposed :

"O 'Lot ! we are messengers of your Lord. They will not be able to touch you. So leave during the night with all the members of your family excepting your wife, for she will receive the same punishment as they receive. And let not any one of you look back. The morning is their appointed time. And is not the morning near at hand ?"

83. And when the time came for Our decree to be enforced, We turned the townships upside down and rained upon them, layers upon layers, stones of baked clay, earmarked by your Lord for this purpose. Remember that such a punishment is not far away from the wicked people.

*For they are married and belong to their husbands.
†That strangers should not be permitted into the town.

Section 8

85. And to the Midianites We sent their brother Shuaib. Said he :

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"O 'my people ! serve Allah, There is none your god but He. And give up the practice of short-weighing and short-measuring. I can see that you have plenty of wealth. But I fear for you the punishment of the Overwhelming Day.

86. "O 'my people ! give the full weight and the right measure, and do not cheat people of their things and do not commit evil in the land, disrupting it. Indeed if you are faithful, the wealth left over to you by Allah is better for you. And remember that I am not a guardian over you."

88. Said they :

"O 'Shuaib ! You being a kind-hearted and right-minded man, does your prayer bid you that we abandon what our fathers served or do not use our property as we like ?"

89. Replied Shuaib :

"O 'my people ! Do'nt you see that I may be possessed of a clear proof from my Lord and He has provided me with an honest livelihood from His own presence ? And I have no intentions to practise behind your back what I forbid you from. All what I intend is to set things right so far as I can. And I get my directions from Allah alone.* In Him alone do I put my trust and to Him I always return.

90. "O 'my folk ! let not your dissension with me provoke against you the punishment which smote the people of Noah and the people of Hud and the people of Saleh. And the people of Lot are not far removed from you. And seek pardon of your Lord and repent to Him, for my Lord is Ever-Merciful, Ever-Loving."

92. Said they :

"O 'Shuaib ! we do not understand much of what you say. All what we can see is that you are just a weakling among us. And had it not been for your tribe, we would have stoned you to

*Or : And my success depends upon Allah alone.
Or : And my strength lies in Allah alone.

death, for you are not an object of love for us."

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93. Said Shuaib :

"O 'my people ! is my tribe stronger for you than Allah ? You have put Him away as a useless thing. But my Lord is going to deal with your misdeeds.

94. "O 'my people ! do your worst. I shall do my best. And soon shall you know as to who gets a disgraceful punishment and who is a liar. And be you on the watch, for I shall be on the watch with you."

95. And when the time for Our decree to be enforced came, in Our mercy did We save Shuaib, and with him, the believers. And the wicked were caught in a roaring noise, and the morning found them lying prostrate in their habitations in a manner as if they had never dwelt there. Behold ! gone are the Midianites as gone are the Thamud.

Section 9

97. And with Our signs and a clear authority did We send Moses to Pharaoh and his chiefs. But his people followed the orders of Pharaoh, even though the orders of Pharaoh were misdirected. He will, on the Judgement Day, lead his people and land them in the Fire. Evil is 'the place' they are led to. And there trails them a curse in this world and in the Hereafter. Evil is the gift they are given.

101. These are the stories of the doomed cities We relate to you. Some of them are in existence while others have perished. We had done their inhabitants no wrong, but they had wronged themselves. When the time for the decree of your Lord to be enforced came, their gods, they called upon besides Allah, proved them of no avail whatsoever, and helped them not but to perdition.

103. That is how your Lord punishes when He punishes the cities steeped in wickedness. Remember that His punishment is bitter and severe.

104. Herein there is a lesson for the one who fears the punishment of the Last Day. It will be a day for which all men will be gathered together. It will be a Memorable Day. We will not defer it but for a specified term. The day it comes no soul shall speak save by His leave, and some of the men will be wretched and some happy.

107. As for the wretched, they will be consigned to the

Fire, therein to moan and cry. Therein will they live, unless your Lord otherwise will, till the heavens and earth abide; for your Lord does what He pleases.

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109. As for the happy, they will be sent to the Paradise. Therein will they live, unless your Lord otherwise will, till the heavens and earth abide, to avail of an everlasting bounty.

110. Have no doubts regarding the outcome of the worship of these people. They will worship only with the result that their fathers have already worshipped, and We will pay them their dues in full.

111. And We gave Moses the Book. But differences arose about it. And* had it not been for the word which had already proceeded from your Lord, the issue between them would have† been judged long ago, for, when the Book which was to resolve their differences came, they entertained grave doubts about it.

112. Remember that all those who have not been paid back for their deeds yet, will be paid back in full by their Lord, for He is well-aware of their deeds.

113. Hence let you, and all those with you who are penitent, go straight as ordered. And do not commit trespass, for He sees the things you do.

114. And do not seek the support of the wicked, or the Fire will reach you without your finding any help; for you have no friends besides Allah.

115. And put up prayers at the two ends of the day and at the beginning and the end of the night. Remember that good deeds do away with evil deeds. This is a thing to remember for those who care to remember.

116. And be steadfast, for Allah deprives not the righteous of their wages.

117. Alas! were it that there had been, among the generations preceding you, men of distinction, other than the few We had saved out of them, forbidding the perpetration of mischief in the land? But what happened was that the wicked, steeped in sin, pursued their wanton pleasures.

118. Remember that your Lord would not destroy cities wantonly when its inhabitants are acting righteously.

119. And had your Lord so willed, He would have made men one nation, for He had created them for this purpose. But except for those on whom your Lord has mercy, they continue to differ. Thus the word of your Lord that He would fill hell

*10 : 12, 10 : 20, 10 : 48, 11 : 59, 83 and 95.
†The unbelievers and the Prophet. 10 : 48.

with jinn and men has come true.

121. We relate to you all about the stories of the Messengers to thereby lend strength to your heart. And there has come to you, in the wake of these stories, the Truth and an Instruction and a Reminiscence for the believers.

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And say to the unbelievers:

"You may do your worst. We shall do our best. And wait and we shall wait with you."

To Allah belong the unseen things of the heavens and the earth. And all matters stand referred to Him. Then serve Him and put your trust in Him; for your Lord is not unaware of the things you do.

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Ali's Allegiance To Abu Bakar

Syed Masud Ahmad M.A. Denmark

The majority of Muslims, being influenced by certain historical records hold the view that after the sad demise of the Holy Prophet of Islam, some members of his family including Hazrat Ali, who was his cousin and son-in-law, did not swear allegiance to Hazrat Abu Bakar as against the generality of Muslims who acknowledged him as successor to the Holy Prophet, *peace be on him*. This estrangement continued for six months till Hazrat Fatima, wife of Ali, breathed her last and the question of Ali becoming the first successor to the Holy Prophet lost all its charm and he was forced to submit to the rule of Abu Bakar.[1]

The alleged plea was that, being kith and kin to the Holy Prophet, they had a better right to the succession than Abu Bakar who was only a friend and a companion. Now if the plea be accepted on its face value, one is constrained to view their conversion to Islam as based on seeking self-aggrandizement and worldly honours and not the acquisition of the pleasure of God. But, as a matter of fact, the unblemished and beautiful lives of Ali and other Hashimite members of the Holy Prophet's family, do not admit of any such objection. As history tells us they were the perfect models of piety and self-denial. As such, it cannot be said of them that the great lesson of self-denial and sacrifice that Islam had taught them, was obliterated from their memories immediately after the death of the Holy Prophet, and they ranged themselves on the side of opposition for power and worldly gains. But historical references pertaining to Ali's alleged estrangement for six months may not be set aside simply on the ground that they injure the Muslims' sentiments, rather, in order to arrive at the real truth we should try to judge them by the same criteria which we use to judge all historical events.

Of the books of history, Tabri is responsible for this story when he quotes Ibn-Hamid saying :

"When the Holy Prophet breathed his last Abu

> Bakar was away from Medina. He returned to the town after three days. Meanwhile no one dared remove the cloth from the face of the Holy Prophet and see that the colour of his abdomen had changed to grayish."[2]

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After narrating the incident of the *Ansars'* meeting in the assembly hall of Medina, Ibn Hamid says that Ali, Zubair and some of the *Muhajarins* refused to swear allegiance to Abu Bakar so much so that, "Zubair in his rage, unsheathed his sword but Omar pacified him and forced him to submit to the authority of Abu Bakar."[3]

Now, so far as Ibn Hamid's statement is concerned, the story, at the very start, gives the lie to its authenticity when he says that Abu Bakar returned to Medina after three days and that meanwhile the colour of the Holy Prophet's abdomen had changed to grayish, while all the original sources of Islamic history are agreed on the point that Abu Bakar, who had gone to Sunah, a few miles away from Medina, as soon as he heard the news of his Holy Master's death hastened to return to the town on the very day the Holy Prophet had expired.[4] As to the change of his abdomen's colour there is absolutely no historical evidence to support Ibn Hamid's statement. This shows that the whole story is a concoction, pure and simple, which, somehow or other, has found its way into historical records. The other part of the story concerning Ali and Zubair's refusal to submit to the proper authority is also false and, on that ground, is to be rejected.

The pages of Tabri also contain another narrative which does not stand the test because one link in the chain of narrators is Abdur Razzaq bin Hammam who is unanimously declared as the most unstrustworthy by the scholars of the *Asma-ul-Rijal.* Accordingly Ibn-Hajar Asqalani, in his well-known book *Tahzeeb-ul-Tahzeeb* says :

> "Abbas Ambari says, 'I have been keeping company with Abdur Razzaq bin Hammam, I can dare say that I found him to be a great liar,

even a greater liar than Waqadi'.

(2) "Zaid bin Malik says, 'Abdur Razzaq was a notorious liar, he was an arch-fabricator of false traditions and that all the *Ulema* of Islam are agreed on the point that any tradition related by him should never be accepted.'

(3) "Abu Hatim says : 'Abdur Razzaq used to fabricate traditions and then draw his own conclusions therefrom—Muhammad bin Ismail Intarazi narrates of Ahmad bin Hambal and Yahya that in the beginning they both accepted his narratives but afterwards they did not do so."[5]

Similarly Imam Nasai scornfully rejected traditions narrated by Abdur Razzaq.

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Now, when the leading *Ulema* of Islam are so bitterly against Abdur Razzaq bin Hammam, how can we depend upon him as a trustworthy narrator of traditions especially when historical evidence goes against his narration.

Again, in another collection of traditions called '*Sahih Muslim*'. Hazrat Ayesha is reported to have said that Ali delayed his allegiance to Abu Bakar, her father, for six months.[6] Well, so far the narrators of this tradition are concerned, their aunthenticity is beyond doubt and cannot be challenged but the subject-matter of the story even if it is reported by Ayesha cannot be accepted at its face value because it runs counter to the one which is reported by five other companions of the Holy Prophet who were eye-witnesses and equally reliable and trustworthy. They are as follows.

(1) "Amar bin Huraith reports that he said to Saeed bin Zaid 'Were you present at the time of the Holy Prophet's death' ?

Saeed bin Zaid : 'Yes, I was'.
Amar : 'When did people swear allegiance to Abu Bakar' ?
Saeed : 'On the very day the Holy Prophet expired. People did not like to be without a Head even for a single day'.

Amar : 'Did anybody oppose him (Abu Bakar)' ?
Saeed : 'None, except the few renegades'.
Amar : 'Was there anyone from among the *Muhajarins* who had delayed the allegiance to Abu Bakar' ?
Saeed : 'None. On the contrary, they came in numbers for allegiance'."[7]

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Now this shows that all the *Muhajarins* were unanimous in the matter of Abu Bakar's leadership including Hazrat Ali and other members of the Holy Prophet's family.

(2) "Habib bin Abi Thabit says that Ali was at his house when it was reported to him that Abu Bakar was receiving the oath of allegiance from the people in the mosque. Ali came out of his house and in his haste forgot to take his covering-sheet with him. He went straight to Abu Bakar and pledged the oath of allegiance to him. Then he got his sheet from home and sat for some time with Abu Bakar in the mosque."[8]

(3) Hazrat Ali himself says :

> "When the Holy Prophet expired, the thought of his successor was uppermost in our minds. We knew that the Holy Prophet, during his illness, always used to appoint Abu Bakar to lead the prayers in his place. So we thought that Abu Bakar was the fittest choice to be our temporal Head. So we chose him to be our leader, spiritual as well as temporal."[9]

This shows that Ali considered Abu Bakar to be a better candidate for leadership than himself. Moreover, it furthur shows that Ali played a prominent role in the matter of Abu Bakar's election as successor to the Holy Prophet. Under the circumstances the question of his delaying allegiance to Abu Bakar does not arise.

(4) We quote below another narrative in support of the one quoted above, from *Musnad* Ahmad bin Hambal and Baihaqi's collections.

> "Amar bin Sufian reports that Ali said on the occasion of The Battle of the Camel that the

> Holy Prophet left us no instructions as to his successor after him, so we elected Abu Bakar as *khalifa*, of our own free will".[10]

(5) There is yet another saying by Abu Saeed Khudri in the *Tarikh-ul-Khulafa* by Sayutee.

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> "On the day the Holy Prophet expired the *Muhajarins* and the *Ansars* assembled in mosque and swore allegiance to Abu Bakar. He ascended the pulpit and looked about but could not see Ali, there. He sent for him and when Ali came, he said, 'O, you, cousin and son-in-law to our Holy Prophet ! Do you mean to keep yourself aloof from the main body of the Muslims.' To which Ali replied, 'This is not the case, O Successor to the Holy Prophet'. Then Ali swore allegiance to Abu Bakar".[11]

Now, the study of all these narratives gives rise to the question what importance can be attached to the saying of Hazrat Ayesha, and which of these contradictory narrations are worthy to be accepted and which not. Should we accept the narrative of a single person, (Ayesha) the subject-matter of which runs counter to the very life and character of a great companion of the Holy Prophet, *peace be on him*, or should we accept the authentic statements of five different persons whose narratives are in complete agreement with historical facts and with the life-history and character of Hazrat Ali ? If we look intently on his daily life we are forced to come to the conclusion that the narratives which refer to his allegiance on the very day of the Holy Prophet's death are worthy of acceptance logically as well as historically.

As to the narrators who carry up the story to Ayesha, we cannot say that all of them were free from all sorts of mistakes particularly in the light of the well-known saying, 'to err is human', probably there seems some mistake in the statement of this or that narrator which has stealthily crept in and which has no direct bearing on the facts of history.

Moreover, the narrator in this case is a lady (Ayesha) and, as a general rule, a woman in an Islamic society cannot be expected to be in the know of everything that occurs in the town as compared to a man who moves about freely and is in touch with the current events. In this particular case a lady's evidence, who could not have been an ey-ewitness, is to be weighed against five male narrators who were eye-witnesses of the event in question and who themselves took part in the deliberations that ensued after the death of the Holy Prophet for the choice of his successor.

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Hence the evidence of the five companions is certainly more weighty, more reliable and more trustworthy than that of a lady, however eminent her position might be.

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4. Tahzeeb-ul-Tahzeeb under Abdur Razzaq bin Hammam.
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8. Tabqat Ibni Sa'ad Vol. 3. p. 130.
   Ibni Asakar as qouted by Sayutee pp. 59-60.
9. Ahmad Bin Hambal.
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Book Reviews

(1) **Lewis Spence :** Encyclopaedia of Occultism. 440pp. University Books, New York. 15 Dollars.

Supernatural has always fascinated Man. He has always felt the presence of a being or beings greater and more potent than him who can and do interfere in his life for good, or worse. Looking at the vast and gigantic phenomena of nature and the depths and immensities of his own soul and mind, he is compelled to conclude that there must be some authority higher and more powerful than him responsible for the creation and perpetuation of all this.

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God, in His immense mercy, has always satisfied and guided this natural feeling by revealing His presence to His chosen ones of all nations and countries. He does not merely reveal Himself to these chosen ones, but gives them a code of life, a religion, following which, others may also find communion with Him. Every clime and every nation has had such prophets, the harbingers of divine light and guidance. Such were Lord Krishna, the Buddha, Abraham, Moses , Jesus and the greatest of all, the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *may peace be on him*. The central point of all true religions is communion with God. Every religion has tried to forge a closer link between man and his Creator. It tries to give adequate and just satisfaction to the feeling and the need for the supernatural which man has always felt. When a religion ceases to do that, or when religious leaders distort their religion and so make it incapable of giving a cogent expression and fulfilment of this most deep-rooted and essential need of his, man is left at the mercy of his imagination. And man's imagination alone is no sure guidance in matters of spirit. Superstition, magic, demonology, spiritism, witchcraft, Satanism and Devil-worship, all, are the foundering attempts of the unaided and unguided human imagination and reason. In his 'Encyclopaedia of Occultism', Mr. Lewis Spence has given us an excellent and very extensive compendium of information on these as well as psychic science, mysticism and metaphysics. University Books have done a great service to the student of occultism by re-publishing this book, which was first published as long back as 1920. The publishers are right when they say in their preface, "Regardless of date of publication, this one remains the best encylopaedia". Much work has been done on various branches of Occultism since it was first published but no better or more comprehensive encyclopaedia has been prepared.

There are about 2500 entries in the book. Some of these are very detailed and run to several pages. There are several types of entries, which make it very easy to use this compendium. Not only are the various branches of the occult described under headings such as Astrology, Santanism witchcraft, Alchemy etc. etc., but a great number of people who had anything

to do with these are also described separately. Then, again, secret religious or semi-religious societies such as Assassins or Freemasons have also been included. The compiler has also given us very valuable information about the main superstitions and predominant occult preoccupations of different races and countries. Thus under 'Celts', he gives us a description of the magic and Druidism of the pre-Saxon inhabitants of England, and briefly points out to the different theories about the origin of Druidism giving the main agruments for and against them. Similarly under India, we find a well arranged and well documented wealth of information about mystical systems of Hinduism and Brahmanism, the very large and intricate demonology which clusters around Hindu mythology, and the popular witchcraft and sorcery. The section on the popular witchcraft and sorcery containing the legend of Lona Chamarin is most interesting. Almost all the countries or races known for their distinctive supernatural elements are given separate entries.

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Men and women known to be practisers or students of witchcraft, Satanism, spiritism, demon or Devil-worship etc. etc. are given individual entries. Pertinent details of their lives and their main achievements and deeds in their respective fields are given in full. Cagliostro, one of the most notorious occult figures of all time, occupies more than seven and a half pages. The author gives all the relevent details of his life and paints a vivid picture of this flamboyant and theatrical character. He takes into account the researches of Mr. Trowbridge and tries to give us an unbiased and balanced account of this man who was once alluded to as the 'Prince of Quacks' by no less a person than Thomas Carlyle. John Dee, Agrippa, Gilles de Laval, Gualdi, Dr. Lamb, Comte de Saint Germain, Raymond Lully, Henry Slade, Denis Zachaire, Pope Boniface VIII, Henry Hopkins and a host of others who had been in any way connected with the occult or the supernatural, are given separate entries and described in detail. The Encylopaedia, as its compiler hoped, serves as an excellent handbook or a work of reference to the several occult 'sciences', covering a very wide and extensive range of subjects and matter. There is a select Bibliography and a comprehensive index also.

There are a number of drawings and plates in the beginning of the book. And here it is that a very gross indiscretion has been committed which completely mars an otherwise excellent production. The publishers have printed, among other drawings and photographs, what is supposed to be a portrait of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, *may peace be on him*. Muslims, all over the world, have time and again made it clear that this is anathema to them. The Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, never sat for a portrait in his life time. There is no record whatsoever that a genuine likeness of his was ever drawn or painted by any of his followers or contemporaries. The fact is that this drawing of false portraits of the Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, dates back to the hostility of the medieval Christianity towards Islam. The medieval Christian priests and leaders tried to paint as hideously ugly a picture of Islam as possible before their public. They were afraid of the truth and beauty of Islam. They realized that if the people were allowed to catch a glimpse of the true face of

Islam they would lose faith in Christianity; and so their hold on them would be gone. Therefore, to hide the truth, and to perpetuate themselves in positions of authority and power they launched and carried on a regular campaign of slander and malicious villification against Islam and its Prophet. Islam was painted as a religion of force and compulsion, a religion which needed and used the sword for its propagation. The Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, was presented (God forbid !) as a cruel, mean, and lascivious person. To add substance to their base and unfounded allegations, they had some false portraits of the Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, painted. This was a part of the process of deliberate distortion and villification of the character of the Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, carried on by the medieval Church.

Any attempt to draw or paint, what purports to be a likeness of the Holy Prophet, *may peace be on him*, is a blasphemy and sacrilege according to Muslims. This reviewer, therefore, thinks that the publishers should immediately cut away this offensive portrait from all the remaining copies of the Encyclopaedia and so stop the harm from going any further.

M. K. A.

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(2) **M. Nasim Saifi :** Pronouncements of the Promised Messiah. 45pp. The Islamic Literature 45 Indumagbo Avenue, Lagos.

Since the emergent nations of West Africa are in search of a pattern of life, a code to act upon, and an ideology by following which they can become at par with advanced and modern nations of the world, and as Islam and Christianity are both vying wtih each other to have their own ideologies accepted, there is no better way of presenting the true teachings of Islam to the people than to place the sayings of the Imam of the Age before them.

It is with this view that Mr. Saifi has collected some of the sayings of the Promised Messiah on some baffling problems of the day that have proved a stumbling block to the modern mind in its search for a right path to attain the goal of life.

It is for this reason, that this reviewer thinks, that this small tract will prove valuable to all those who are seriously in search of truth.

A. M.

(3) **M. Nasim Saifi :** Presenting Islam to the Christians. Ahmadiyya Bookshop. Lagos, West Africa.

Christian Missionaries, in order to gain converts from among the Muslims tried to lower Islam in the eyes of its adherents and then presented Christianity for their acceptance. Mr. Nasim Saifi in this booklet has tried to pay the Rev. gentlemen in their own coin.

A. M.

(4) **M. Nasim Saifi :** Hazrat Ahmad : The Promised Messiah. Ahmadiyya Bookshop, Lagos, W. Africa.

The author has presented, in a nutshell, the history of Ahmadiyyat, and its salient features together with a brief biography of its Holy Founder. It is a synopsis of what the Ahmadiyya Movement stands for.

A. M.

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